(d) whether new aircrafts have been obtained in their place; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) Out of the existing 4 B747-200 aircraft in Air India's fleet, one aircraft is grounded since January, 2003 pending disposal. Global tender for its sale has already been invited. The remaining 3 B747-200 aircraft will also be phased out when replacement capacity is made available.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. However, to meet short term needs, Air India has taken 9 A310 and one B747-400 aircraft on dry lease.

Fresh legislation in lieu of AAI amendment bill, 2000

150. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had withdrawn the Airports Authority of India Bill, 2000 which was pending in Parliament;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether a fresh legislation is likely to be brought forward;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the names of the airports likely to be upgraded in the country as part of Government's efforts to create world-class civil aviation infrastructure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government had withdrawn the Airports Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2000 in the previous Budget session of Parliament to introduce a new comprehensive Bill namely, Airports Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2003.

(c) and (d) The fresh legislation was introduced in Lok Sabha and passed on 9th May 2003.

(e) In the first instance the airports of Delhi and Mumbai are being taken up for upgradation to world-class standards.

Air India's entry in domestic price war

151. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India has joined domestic price war; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) Air India's Domestic fares have always been lower than other domestic carriers operating in India. Most of the domestic sectors on Air India are an extension of international flights. Competitive domestic fares help to fill up seats on domestic leg, which otherwise would have operated empty.

Expansion of airports in the North-East

152. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a sum of Rs. 300 crore has been allocated for construction, expansion or augmentation of airports in the North-East;

(b) if so, the details of the projects contemplated thereunder and cost thereof; and

(c) the steps taken so far for implementation thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) An amount of Rs. 250 crore has been earmarked in the Tenth Five Year Plan for construction, expansion and augmentation of airports in North-East.

(b) and (c) Details of projects alongwith cost and status are as under:

GUWAHATI-Installation of two passenger boarding bridges, 3 escalators, 2 elevators, expansion of apron and allied works and